

The only account that a mountain tribe in the interior of the Kabadi district could give of their faith was that their great spirit lived on the mountains and was called Oarova ; he had a wife named Ooirova and they had a son called Kurorova.

A native of Orokolo, a place at the head of the gulf of Papua, furnished the following particulars as to the beliefs of his tribe:—

“The spirit *Kanitu* made two men and two women who came out of the earth. The name of the elder brother was *Leleva* and the younger *Vovod* ; from them have sprung all mankind. This spirit lives in spirit-land on the mountains and when he visits a village he rests on the ridge of the temple. He is represented in the temple in wicker-work ; there he is consulted and presents made to him.”

In connection with this word *Kanitu*, or *Kanidu*, which by the way seems to have been adopted by the missionaries as a mode of translating the word *God*, it is noticeable that the word *Sinitu*, meaning a malevolent spirit, is found among certain Malayan tribes, *e.g.*, the islanders of Mantawe off the West Coast of Sumatra. See *Journl. Ind. Arch.*, IX, 287.

As is the case with all of the larger eastern islands, the interior of New Guinea seems to be inhabited by aboriginal tribes who have been driven back to the hills by a robuster race now occupying the coast districts. While the latter are described as being in places as fair as South Sea Islanders, the former are said to be black with woolly hair, beards and moustaches, and are all cannibals. The physique of the people is found to improve as one travels eastward from Port Moresby, and Dufaure island is mentioned as the point of meeting of two races—one from the Kerepunu side and the other from the east. Both would seem to differ considerably from the Papuans of the Gulf. At South Cape the people are small and puny and much darker than the Eastern Polynesians.

The houses of the natives are built on piles, and in many places villages are found composed entirely of houses built in this way in shallow water on the sea-shore, communication being maintained between them by horizontal poles supported on perpendicular ones. Mr. GILL describes these as [“Swiss-lake-like villages” in allusion, of

course, to discoveries of the remains of houses raised on piles in lacustrine sites in Switzerland and North Italy.

WALLACE long ago stated that the view of an ancient lake-dwellers village, given as the frontispiece of Sir CHARLES LYELL'S "Antiquity of Man," is chiefly founded on a sketch of a New Guinea village, viz., Dorey in the North-west of the island.*

The custom of building on piles or bamboo posts at various heights above the ground is very general from the frontiers of Tibet to the islands of the South Sea, and is one of the many points which support the theory of an identity of origin between the Indo-Chinese races and the races of the Indian Archipelago.† Specimens of Malay villages on stilts standing in the sea may be viewed any day in New Harbour, Singapore.

The customs of the people as regards clothing are not such as to encourage a hope of finding a new market for English cotton goods in New Guinea! The married men and women are described as having very little dress; the young men and girls have a little more than their parents. Shell ornaments for the hair, shell necklaces, and nose-ornaments and armlets of the same material are much worn. So are tortoise-shell ear-rings. A grass petticoat is worn by women and is said to be identical with that formerly worn in the Ellice group, the grass being ornamented by alternate red and yellow strips of pandanus leaf; married women have their heads close shaven, while unmarried girls wear their hair "in a complete frizzle, four or five inches long and not parted." Young men wear a coloured band of native cloth round the stomach. It is made from the bark of the native mulberry, and is woven tightly on the body, the flesh bulging out above and below. It can be removed only by cutting it. The face is painted in stripes of black, white, red and yellow, and nasal ornaments, often nine inches long and curved, are inserted in the pierced septum. At Murray Island the old men, to conceal their grey hair, take to wigs, "which represent them as having long, flowing, curly hair as in youth!"

Tattooing is common. Women at Port Moresby are described by Mr. GILL as "exquisitely tattooed," while at Hula,

* WALLACE'S *Malay Archipelago*, II, 305.

† Colonel YULE, *Journ. Anthropol. Instit.*

further east, the tattooing is said to be "simply perfect" and to leave upon the mind the effect of clothing. "Married women have a necklace or chain tattooed round the neck; each pattern has a distinct name. It is done to please the future husband, who has to pay liberally for it." At South Cape, says Mr. CHALMERS, the women "tattoo themselves all over their faces and bodies and make themselves look very ugly," shewing either an inferiority in art on the part of the South Cape people, or a diversity of taste between the two authors. Tattoo-marks on the chest and back of a chief indicate severally a life violently taken.

When in mourning for a relative the body is blackened over and besmeared with ashes, and the chest and shoulders, and sometimes the entire person, are enveloped in fine net-work. A widow will sometimes remain in mourning for five years, during which period, it is said, she wears no ornaments and performs no ablutions. A mother in mourning for her daughter will wear round her neck all the ornaments once the property of the deceased, and along with them the jawbone taken from the unburied body. The latter incident must be looked upon, however, as a charm to avert the evil influence of the spirit of the deceased rather than any token of mourning, for in another place Mr. CHALMERS describes one of his guides (at Stacy Island) as wearing, as an armet, the jawbone of a man whom he had killed and eaten, "while others strutted about with human bones dangling from their hair and about their necks." Similarly, it may be doubted if the "immense necklace," seen by Mr. GILL, slung over the left shoulder of a woman (consisting of the vertebræ of her deceased brother), was really worn "as a mark of affection," and the five widows of one husband who carried about, each of them, a portion of his remains, the eldest carrying the skull in a basket, were probably guided by some superstition which the European observer did not fathom.

Cannibalism, though not universal, is general. The Stacy Islanders boasted of having killed and eaten ten of their enemies from the mainland, and the house of the chief was hung with the skulls of the enemies eaten by himself and his people. Among these people a cannibal feast, to which

Mr. CHALMERS was invited, was held and "some of our friends appeared with pieces of human flesh dangling from their necks and arms." The black tribes of the interior have the reputation of being cannibals, and those with whom the Port Moresby natives trade are said to laugh at the latter for not eating such delicate food as human flesh. Instances are given too of cannibalism on the part of natives of the Hayter and Heath Islands, of Teste Island and of South Cape. At the last-named place a friendly chief presented to Mrs. CHALMERS a human breast, "a highly prized and delicate bit." It is not astonishing, therefore, that her husband records that after this he ceased to gratify the natives in this part of New Guinea with exhibitions of his chest, though the free inspection of the feet, boots, arms, and chest of an European seems to peculiarly delight them. "All shout with delight, and every new arrival must have a look."

The gods of the natives of the south-east of New Guinea are Kaevakuku, Semese, and Tauparau, the first being a female and the others male spirits. The district of Elema is supposed to be the place of residence of these gods, and here, as well as at other places along the coast, there are temples containing idols where dances and feasts are held. No females or youths may approach the temples. Singing enters largely into the worship of these people, which would seem to be rather dictated by the fear of evil spirits than belief in beneficent ones. "The centre post in every house is sacred to Kaevakuku and her portion of food in every feast is first offered there. The first fruits belong to her. All planting is useless unless blessed by the gods. The sun belongs to Kaevakuku. Rain, lightning and thunder to Semese and Tauparau." "Kaevakuku is represented by a large frame of wicker-work. Semese and Tauparau are made from blocks of wood and stand outside of some temples, and against all the posts running down the centre." During a thunderstorm the natives beat drums and shout in order to drive away the storm-spirits.

"Spiritists," as Mr. CHALMERS calls them, who profess to make revelations by the aid of spirits who speak through

them, after the manner of the Borneo *manang* and the Malay *puwang*, are much believed in and feared, and, like the latter, adopt a feigned voice and use much singing and chanting in their incantations. They have the reputation of being expert poisoners, and wars are undertaken and murders committed on their representations. It is no wonder that the sorcerer "gets the best of everything—best pig, best food, best tomahawk, best shells." There are sorceresses also. So, among the islanders of Buru, the "Swangi," who has a familiar spirit at his command and is able to cause sickness or disaster, receives presents, not only from those anxious to retain his goodwill, but also from those who wish to use his power to the injury of an enemy.*

Of social customs, or ceremonies at births and marriages, there is no account. It would appear to be the custom for the husband to purchase his wife, one chief having stated to Mr. CHALMERS that he had paid "an enormous sum" for his consort, viz., ten arm shells, three pearl shells, two strings of dogs teeth, several hundreds of cocoa-nuts, a large quantity of yams, and two pigs. But in another district (up the William River) a man pays nothing on marriage for a girl, but has to pay heavily if the object of his choice be a widow!

Accounts of burial customs vary according to the different localities and tribes visited. Of the natives of Suau, or South Cape, Mr. GILL says: "All the members of a family at death occupy the same grave (above which a small house is erected), the earth that thinly covered the last occupant being scooped out to admit the new-comer. These graves are shallow; the dead being buried in a sitting posture, hands folded. The earth is thrown in up to the mouth only. An earthen pot covers the head. After a time the pot is taken off, the perfect skull removed and cleansed—eventually to be hung up in a basket or net inside the dwelling of the deceased over the fire to blacken in the smoke.

* FORBES. Eastern Archipelago, 404 (Buru), 338 (Timor).

Among the Koiari tribe the bodies of the dead are not buried, but are dried and preserved in the following manner:—*

“A fire is kept burning day and night at the head and feet for months. The entire skin is removed by means of the thumb and forefinger and the juices plastered all over the face and body of the operator (parent, husband, or wife of the deceased). The fire gradually desiccates the flesh, so that little more than the skeleton is left. Their next anxiety is to discover by whose sorceries he or she has died. The mode of proceeding is as follows: the wise man of the tribe places on the body as many bits of dried grass as there are known villages round about, each bit being placed in the correct relative position. The incantation begins; at length a fly or some other insect alights on one of these straws, probably attracted by the smell. It is now evident to the wise man that an inhabitant of the village indicated by the straw occasioned the death of their friend by sorcery, for has not the god spoken? That same night revenge must be obtained! The desiccated body is well wrapped up and fixed in a lofty tree. The ashes of the two fires are rubbed over the faces of the relatives and other watchers, a grand feast and dancing concluding the whole.” The resemblance of some of these incidents to the customs of the islanders of Buru and Timor and of the Australian aborigines is worthy of remark. FORBES has noticed that the Timorese, like the Australians, cannot understand why any one should die unless he be killed and seek, after a death, the person whose malevolent influence has caused it. † The same people suspend dead bodies, folded at the thighs and wrapped in mats, in lofty trees. ‡

In districts where burial is practised (*e. g.*, Port Moresby) a stake is planted beside the grave to which are tied the spear, club, bow and arrow of the deceased, (if a man),

* Mr. GILL points out that D'ALBERTIS in his work on New Guinea [vol. ii, pp. 133, 134], has furnished evidence of a similar practice obtaining among the natives of the Fly River, 500 miles further west.

† Eastern Archipelago, 404, 438.

‡ *Id.*, p. 434.

broken to prevent theft: at the grave of a woman her cooking utensils, grass petticoats, &c., are similarly suspended. This is the *baiya* of the Dayaks of Borneo* and agrees, as Mr. GILL points out, with customs which prevail generally among the Polynesians. At a funeral which he witnessed, the widow sat at the head of the grave besmeared with ashes. A lament was sung by the assemblage to the accompaniment of drums which each man carried. The women scratched each others' faces and bosoms until they bled freely: "then the hair of the dead was plucked and shaved off as charms; indescribable phallic scenes followed." It is the custom for relatives to watch by the graves of their deceased friends, and small huts are erected over or near the graves, in which they sleep at night.

Of a tribe of mountaineers whom he visited, Mr. CHALMERS says: "the natives very seldom bury their dead, leaving the body in a house set apart for it, which they often visit. When a number of deaths take place, they leave the village and settle somewhere else not far off. There is one grave here, near to our house, on which a tobacco plant is growing, a bamboo pipe, the property of the deceased, alongside a few sticks on end with yams on top. When they do bury, the body is placed standing in the grave." A most cruel and unnatural custom, said to prevail in the district of Aroma, is that of burying alive decrepit parents and grandparents. A native teacher saw a man dig a grave for his aged grandmother. With his own strong arms he deposited her in it, despite her tears and feeble resistance. When remonstrated with, he replied: "She cannot live. She is already as good as dead." He then filled up the grave and trod the earth down upon the living victim and went home.

Taro, sago, cocoa-nuts, betel-nuts, yams, plantains, and sugarcane are produced abundantly. "Sago is cooked with shell fish, boiled with bananas, roasted on stones, baked in the ashes, tied up in leaves, &c., &c." Pork and the meat of the wallaby are much valued as food by the natives, and iguanas are also eaten. The indigenous breed of fowls is inferior. Cucumbers are cultivated. A small oyster, described as "capital eating"

* See No. 14 of this Journal, p. 291.

is plentiful at Port Moresby. The South Sea Island *kava* (*piper methysticum*) grows wild. Among the products of one district are enumerated raspberries, strawberries, nutmegs, tobacco, capsicums and indigenous cotton.

Mr. CHALMERS gives the native names of several species of wild animals, but as he did not see them, was unable to identify them. "The *Jakoni*, *Gomina* and *Agila* are very large and fierce. The *Papara* and *Gadana* are small but fierce." In the existence of these Mr. GILL does not appear to believe, for he says that the wild pig (*sus papuensis*) is the largest and, excepting the dingo, almost the only true mammal in New Guinea, all the rest being marsupials. There are two species of wallaby in New Guinea and "two species of the hitherto strictly Australian genus *Echidna*, or spiny ant-eater, have been discovered," (*Tachyglossus Bruinii* and *T. Lawesii*). Both forms are oviparous. The *Echidna* produces a single egg at a birth, thus supplying, as Mr. GILL remarks, the connecting link between reptiles and mammalia.

Mr. GILL discusses the relative advantages of three places as the capital of British New Guinea. These are Hall Sound, Port Moresby, and Kerepunu. The first is near a vast extent of fertile land, but swamps make it unhealthy; the second is shut off by hills from the interior; and the third though giving access to a valuable district is so thickly inhabited that to obtain a site would be difficult. The advantages of a safe harbour tell in favour of Port Moresby, but probably the headquarters of the High Commissioner will be the deck of his steamer for some time to come. The density of the population and the attachment of the natives to their holdings will make colonisation in New Guinea a very different undertaking to that which lay before early settlers in Australia. At South Cape Mr. GILL was told that "every acre of soil along this part of New Guinea has its owner. A native desirous of making a plantation on another person's land can do so by asking permission, or by a stipulated payment, but only for once." The cultivation of jute is mentioned as an industry likely to be valuable in the future, a specimen of New Guinea jute, submitted to "a well-known Dundee firm," having been pronounced to be the finest jute in the world.

This book contains an account of the murder of four native teachers and the wives and children of two of them in 1881, and of the murder of Dr. JAMES and Mr. THORNGEEN, with allusions to other outrages. And it is not difficult to gather from Mr. CHALMERS' unvarnished narrations of his various journeys that difficulties and dangers which he successfully surmounted might, in the case of one not gifted with equal coolness and courage, have given occasion for bloodshed, and consequently for permanent hostility with a revengeful people. His knowledge and influence will, no doubt, be most useful to those charged with the administration of the Protectorate, and it is to be hoped that he may, at some future, time be able to give to the world fuller details about New Guinea than those contained in this unpretending volume, which has apparently been compiled in England, in his absence, from some of his journals and papers. Ill-digested as information communicated in this way must necessarily be, it is sufficient to enable the reader to admit, with the author of the introduction, that Mr. CHALMERS has combined the qualities of missionary and explorer in a remarkable degree, and has added enormously to the stock of our geographical knowledge of New Guinea, and to our accurate acquaintance with the ways of thinking, the habits, superstitions, and mode of life of the various tribes of natives.

W. E. M.

